Small caterers and vendors

*6. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Catering Policy of 2005 has virtually removed small catering and vending contractors whose holding was confined to one stall and trolley at A, B, and C stations;

(b) if so, what are the detailed reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a number of catering and vending stalls were allotted to the big companies on all railway stations after removing the small vending contractors who were earning their livelihood through these stalls; and

(d) if so, whether the above action is not violating the constitutional right of small contractors?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) and (c) No, Sir.

(b) and (d) Does not arise.

Subsidized fertilizers to small tea growers

*7. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware about the scarcity of fertilizers for small tea growers in Assam;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to mitigate this problem;

(c) whether it is a fact that small tea growers have to buy fertilizers at higher prices despite Government's claim that fertilizers are supplied to farmers at subsidized rates;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by Government to ensure supply of subsidized fertilizers to small tea growers; and

(e) whether Government would ensure the allocation of sufficient quantity of fertilizers to small tea growers?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (e) The demand of tea growers in Assam in included in the overall requirement of Assam State and so are the supplies.

Urea is the only fertilizer under partial movement and distribution control of the Government. Union Government ensures availability of urea at State level and the State governments are responsible for its distribution within the State.

However, the Department of Fertilizers monitors the availability of fertilizers up to district level. Availability of 95,490 MT of Urea during Kharif 2008 has been adequate enough to sustain its sales of about 90,320 MT.